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787 To inquire of the celestials as to whether the position of the ancestral graves is lucky or not, or as to the best site and position of a proposed new family dwelling, is called *ch'a nien fêng shui* (查驗風水). This is done by covering the head and inviting the spirits to make a revelation.

789 *Ta t'ai p'ing pao fu* (打太平保福) is a noisy ceremony at which many of the practices given under sorcery are used before a woman's confinement to ensure a safe delivery. It includes bringing the boxes, *la hsiang tzŭ* (拉箱子). An actor is brought to the house with all his paraphernalia, he dresses as a woman, has his face powdered and painted, after which he jumps and dances in the chief rooms of the house. In some families a stage is erected in an adjoining field for the occasion.

Chuai ssŭ niang tzŭ (踹私娘子), to act the celestial women of the house. These are the *t'ien hsien niang* (天仙) and the *ti hsien niang* (地仙), who are believed to be able to protect life and property and add years to the lives of those in the house. A skilled actor, dressed like a woman, walks and minces up and down the house. At the close of the performance a feast is spread and the actors drink freely of wine and sing lewd songs. This last part is called *p'ei hua* (陪花), to entertain the flower, or the impersonated woman. For this performance the actors are liberally paid. Such performances are almost wholly confined to the well-to-do baser sort.

782 *Ching t'an* (靖壇), to pacify the altar of the lemuria. Some families have a *t'an shên* (壇神) and some have none, but those who have are generally of a low and superstitious character. This altar is generally located on the left-hand side of the chief room of the house. The tablet is sometimes written and at others carved. The families who trace their ancestry from the province of Kiangsi have the altar hung up in a basket on the left-hand side of the heaven and earth tablet. The pacification of this spirit takes place once every three or five years, unless a change is made in the residence. In this ceremony all the practices of ordinary divination are used with many additions, and the ceremony is much

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more complicated. A very little of each of the following articles is permanently deposited under the stone on which the tablet rests;—gold, silver, iron, brass, salt, tea, rice and beans. The feast may last for days, and two or three pigs may be killed for the occasion, but I have noticed that families who make much of this altar soon come to poverty. The following are some of the gods of this altar of the lemuria:

The general of the gods of the lemuria. The two lieutenants. The female general of the altar. The twelve flowery women who rule the women of the house for the year, each ruling one month. The three braves who fight for the family. Lo Kung of great mesmeric fame. Thousands of thousands of soldiers and horses. Myriads of myriads of leaders of spirits. The guardian of the east and west granaries. The governor of the tea and wine shops. The guardian of the farmyard.

When the altar is being pacified the gods of the cow, horse, sheep, chicken, dog, pig and cats have all to be dealt with and pacified. For this an animal-skin or an imitation animal is produced, someone gets inside it and imitates the cry of the animal.

Pa man chin pao yu ssŭ, 八蠻進寶游司. This is the guardian of the family wealth and is one of the gods of wealth, which are thus included in the altar. The Tibetans are mentioned because they are supposed to abound in the precious metal and the number eight is a lucky one, hence the saying, 要得發不離八, if a thing is to prosper you can't do without the number eight.

Conjuring (耍把戲).

Tight-rope walking is common, *ch'ai so ch'iao* (蹅索橋). The rope may be a hundred feet long and fifty above the ground. The performer is a girl of about ten, who carries a sandbag in each hand.

A woman stands on her head on a table and balances a wine cask first on one foot and then on the other, *têng t'an tzŭ* (登罈子). Sometimes a child is put inside the cask and crawls out and sits on the top of it while it is balanced in the air.

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789 A woman balances a ladder on the palms of her hands, then a child threads each rung up and turns over the top and threads its way down again head downward. This is called *fan fei yün t'i* (番飛雲梯).

A bare table is covered with a cloth; after beating of drums and burning of incense and paper, the actor will ask if the guests have all come, and on being assured that they have arrived, the table-cloth is removed and there is displayed a fine, hot, ready-cooked feast.

A flower-pot is covered with a cloth and after some music and incantations the cloth is removed and a fine flowering orchid exposed to view. The same kind of trick is also done with a pot of earth in which a melon seed is sown.

The wooden frame which holds the fire basin is put down and covered with a cloth; and after music and incantations the cloth is removed, when a hot fire on the fire basin is exposed to view. Many are willing to pay large sums of money for instruction in this art.

An empty wine-glass is held in one hand and an empty jar in another and after a few motions and incantations wine is found emptied from the jar into the wine cup, and people are invited to drink.

A woman's embroidered shoe is manipulated in the hand, and it suddenly becomes a rabbit, pigeon, rat or other creature. The conjurer after a little seizes the animal and knocks it on the back of the head and it becomes a shoe once again in his hand.

A wisp of straw becomes changed into a rat. This is very much the same as the last.

Coloured paper is cut into strips and covered with a cloth. When the cloth is removed the strips of paper have been transformed into pretty lanterns already lighted.

A fan is torn to shreds. The conjurer then makes various motions with his hands and the fan is produced and opened up as good as new.

Paper is torn into small pieces and covered with a cloth; when the cloth is removed a swarm of hornets fly

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buzzing about, but as soon as they are caught they become pieces of paper again. 789

The leaves and twigs of a willow tree are broken into pieces and thrown into the river, where they appear to become fishes, but when caught they are simply the willow twigs.

A coin is placed on the upper side of a thick board with one hand and received on the lower side with the other.

A child is laid down with the stomach bent upwards, boxes full of heavy things are put on its stomach, then a man goes on to the top of the boxes, but still there is no sign of the distended stomach giving way under the weight.

A child is taken and rolled in red calico, the conjurer asks for money and, after a contribution has been given, a sword is displayed and the child yells, then another collection is taken up, after which the child's arm is cut off and thrown to the horrified crowd, and still another collection is taken up, then another arm is cut off and thrown out. The child is thus gradually dismembered before the gazing and credulous crowd, but the greatest wonder of all is that this child will be well and about the next day! This is generally the last and most exciting act of the conjurer in a place; for this he often gets large sums of money in collections.

Divination or Sorcery, Wu Shu (巫術).

A sorcerer is called *tuan kung* (端公); the classical name is *nan wu* (男巫), and the colloquial or slang name is *kuei hsiang yo* (鬼鄉約). 754 791

A witch is *tuan kung p'o* (端公婆), *tsou yin* (走陰) *p'o*, *shên hsien* (神仙) *p'o*, or *nü wu* (女巫) (a bookish name). One term may be common in one place while another will be used elsewhere.

Though the art of divination is much the same everywhere, still the Tibetan art is more intense than that practised by the Chinese sorcerers. The Tibetan sorcerer does all the Chinese do and some things extra. So before dealing with

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791/787 *P'u kua* (卜卦) is to forecast future events by means of the eight diagrams, to divine.

K'an hsiang (看相). The physiognomist makes the book *Liu chuang shên hsiang* (柳莊神相) by Shui Ching of the Han dynasty, or the *ma i* (麻衣) *hsiang* by Ch'ên Tuan of the Sung dynasty the basis of his art.

791/789 The following are some of the things they pretend to be able to do:—

They guarantee that their clients will get by raffle the funds of the joint stock company. Several people join in a company when they want to get a larger sum together than they could otherwise do at one time, but by paying in monthly instalments they can manage it. The fund is raffled for each month at the home of one of their number. Some families who want the money quickly appeal to this class for assistance to get the lucky number.

They undertake the protection of a family from demons and snakes. They also fix the site of a dwelling house, the choice of a lucky day to begin building, and the lucky day for hoisting the top beam of the house.

They fix a lucky day for funerals, marriages and almost everything, by an appeal to the stars. Each day has a governing star and they decide whether the day star agrees with the birth star of the individual. This is one of the most common of the methods of fixing a lucky day, and it is done by what is known as the *fa chia*, one of the schools of geomancy.

They fix a lucky day by what is known as an appeal to the three things which harmonize; that is, heaven, earth, and man. This method is known as the *hsing chia* (形家), or *k'an yü* (堪輿) *chia*, and is another of the schools of geomancy.

Wu ho (合) and *liu ho*. They tell fortunes by an appeal to the five elements, gold, wood, water, fire and earth, or by an appeal to the four points of the compass with the zenith and nadir. These methods are used by fortunetellers and geomancers.

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They contract for the bringing of a lunatic to his right mind.

They arrange for the removal of a ghost from a house. If houses have uncanny sounds or have the reputation of being haunted or are troubled with snakes, insects or other vermin, the geomancer fixes a lucky day and invites a sorcerer to assist him drive out the pests or ghosts.

Divining by copper cash is called *Wên Wang kua.* On the side of the cash are Chinese characters, that side is known as *ma tzŭ* (麻子). The side with Manchu characters is known as the *mo êrh* (末兒). Three cash are used and the count kept as to how many *ma tzŭ* or *mo êrh* show in six throws of the coins.

Mei hua shu (梅花數), to divine by whatever the divining person may carry in the hand or on the person is known as *sui chi ying pien* (隨機應變), to answer as occasion demands.

They also divine by the use of the six *jên* (壬) or combinations in the sexagenary cycle; by this method it is said that they can find out the name, dwelling place and likeness of a thief and where he has hidden the stolen goods, and other necessary details.

There is a method of divining invented by Shao K'ang-chieh of the Han dynasty. It was largely prophetic and dealt with the future of the country. Though this method is still used, few if any are able to understand it fully.

Ch'i mên tun chia (奇門遁甲), to divine by an appeal to the stars. This method is generally used in connection with prophetic prognostications.

Divining by the use of dominos is a method used to fix the dates for marriages, to find lost articles or a lost relative, or when wealth may be obtained.

The Itinerant Vendor

Pedlars sell spirit charms from such idols as the Ling kwan and the T'ien shih; both are to prevent or to heal diseases.

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443 They sell the spirit cat which is the figure of a cat painted on paper with the charm 勅令, *chih ling*, written on it. 778 Also the pictures of Chung K'uei (鍾馗), which ward off 789 demons. He was a scholar of the T'ang dynasty. Scholars take his pictures to the examination boxes to keep away demons during the examinations.

They also sell pictures of the hills and valleys, of flowers and bamboos (generally as scrolls), of various birds and animals, also a well-known set of four Chinese pictures of fisherman, woodman, farmer and student.

Imitations of ancient styles of writing are also hawked about.

Mai hsin wên is the news vendor. Sometimes the news is purely of an idolatrous and superstitious nature, at others it is political and agitating.

Chu-ko Liang is believed to have written a number of prophetical sayings, which he had engraved on stone slabs and buried; every now and then one of these is reported to have been dug up and the inscription printed in cheap book form and sold as reliable news. There is an unlimited supply of words and examples from the lives of eminent men printed and sold, as well as stories of the efficacious and healing power of the idols, or how these idols meted out retributions to the wicked, or prescribed a medicine to stop a plague.

Another work sold is the prophetical utterances of the celestials as contained in the *Kuan Yin ching* or the *T'ai Yang ching*.

Others sell *ch'uan su ko* (勸俗歌), ballads which exhort the people against gambling, wine and fornication, or illustrated booklets which describe the evils of opium.

Itinerant Buddhist and Taoist Priests, *Hsing chueh sêng* (行脚僧), and *Yu fang tao* (游方道)

792 It is commonly said that this class of persons will surely find some way of taking revenge if offended. It is also said that all the physiognomists belong to the palliative business and the palliatives come under the priests' rule. Their

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784 If a person sneezes, the first thing he will say is "Who is
777 speaking about me?" If a person's ears ring, some evil is being spoken of him. If ears burn a law suit is impending. A burning face indicates the loss of property. The god of the bed is worshipped on the moving from one house to another, and when a new bed is brought, in order that peaceful slumbers may come to the family. Soldiers sharpen their swords once yearly on the thirteenth of the fifth moon. Kites are flown by men on the ninth of the ninth moon as a medium for carrying off evil influences from the home. If a kite should fall on any person's house it is reckoned to be very unlucky and no one would dare to go and claim it. Children often wear a small mirror on the front of their hats in order that the demons may see their ugly faces and depart.

If a man should dream that he has swallowed the sun and moon or pearls, he will eventually have a rich son. To dream of much water is to get great riches. To dream of fire is to get honours by learning. People who are troubled by evil dreams go and tie a knot on a shrub known as the *mêng hua*, dream flower. If an old man has a red nose it is the sign of the greatest happiness. If the house is infested with rats, many people keep what is called a *shên mao êrh*, or spirit cat, pasted up in the kitchen. This is also called a Kien chou (箭州) *mao êrh* because they are made at that place. This is simply the picture of a cat painted on a piece of yellow paper. It is reckoned very unlucky to howl or shout on a hill-top as a gale of wind and rain may follow.

The terror of the nine-headed monster (蟲) is great in some places. This would appear to be a flock of wild geese flying in the shape of the character nine. If these pass over a city at night many people rush out of doors to drive them off as it is believed that if it drops pus, the family will become poor; if it drops blood, the whole family will die.

The Chinese believe that there is such a monster and the contention of the heads for the ascendancy makes it drop blood.

789 Houses whose doors open on some public path sometimes have wooden screens set up in front of the doors to keep

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out demons. These screens are called *ch'a p'ing* (插 屏), stuck-in screen. When a house is troubled with sickness the neighbours often ask whose dirty demon has come hither to give trouble.

When a person has a hatred for another and is bent upon secret revenge, a straw effigy of the enemy is made and pricked in the eyes and nose with a needle, cursed and burned; it is believed that this will inflict sickness or even death upon the enemy and is spoken of as *shê yin chien* (射 陰 箭), shooting a secret arrow. Another way is to go to the temple of the city god, and accuse the person at the idol shrine; the indictment is written out and presented with candles and incense, after which it is burned to ashes. This is called *kao yin chuang* (告 陰 狀), making an indictment to Hades. When a dead child has been carried out of the house, the door-step is sawn or hacked to indicate that the debt of some ancestor has now been paid in full.

Sometimes over the door of the house will be found written the two characters *i shan*, one good deed; being an abbreviation of the saying, "one good deed will cover a thousand bad ones." This is to deceive the demons and keep them out of the house.

Some haunted houses have a mirror hung up over the door, so that when the demon comes and sees his own face he will take fright and depart. Some parents use for their children what are known as tigers' pillows so as to frighten the demons.

On the eighth of the fourth moon there is a custom known as *chia mao ch'ung*, or marrying out the caterpillar. The idea is that caterpillars are females and in marrying them out they will leave this part of the country alone. A small red rosette is put up in the chief room of the house as an evidence. 佛生四月八, 毛蟲今日嫁, 嫁在深山去, 永遠不歸家. On the eighth of the fourth moon was Buddha's birth. On that day caterpillars are married out. Married far into the mountain recesses never more to return.

At the spring equinox there is a custom known as *ching chüeh wang*, to reverence the king of birds. Rice loaves are

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789 made into which a pair of scissors is stuck, and the whole thing is displayed outside the house; this it is believed will keep the family in peace. In some places a huge paper bird is paraded round the streets with a crowd following, probably an imitation Phoenix Bird.

On the seventh of the seventh moon there is the custom known as *hsien kua*, to offer the melon. This is also the time when girls pray for ability, or *ch'i ch'iao* (巧). In some places women and girls take what is known as *ch'iao ya tzŭ*, or ability sprouts, which are really sprouted beans. The sprouts with a basin of water are taken before the shrine of the tutelary god, where incense and candles have been lit. Each girl takes one of the long sprouts, breaks it into small pieces and throws them into the basin of water, then waits to see if these form into the shape of a flower; if they do she will be clever at needlework.

On the first of the tenth moon there is a custom known as *hsien niu wang*, offering to the ox spirit. Rice cakes, *ch'i pa* (糍粑), are made and given to the ox, which is not supposed to do any work on that day. Anyone daring to work his animal will be cursed and told that he ought to become an ox in the next life. In many country homes the oxen are dressed and petted on this their birthday.

753 824 Hydrophobia (瘋狗傷人), *fêng kou shang jên*. It is said that the snake when about to hibernate eats of a herb called *ling chih ts'ao*, "boletus." At the time of moving insects (驚蟄), it comes forth from hibernation, and vomits a great amount of phlegm, *shê hsüan tu* (蛇漩毒), which smells very strongly. If a dog eats this or if individuals smell it, they are from a Chinese point of view doomed to an attack of hydrophobia. This herb if eaten by human beings makes them comatose, but after the effects have been slept off, it is believed that the individual will live to a great age. This disease of hydrophobia is to be found all the year round, but is most common in spring time when the oil plant is in flower, so much so that the saying runs The rape is in flower; mad dogs will make their appearance. But it is said that the disease among dogs has nothing to do with the rape